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Agonizing Re-appraisal Is Recommended

President Kennedy has assigned his brother, the attorney general, to make an investigation of the nation's top intelligence agency, known colloquially as the CIA, which is charged with keeping this country informed on movements and events everywhere in the world and particularly in those spots where danger to our own security lurks. Mr. Kennedy's action was said to have been triggered by the unhappy events in Cuba during the past few days and the part assertedly played by the CIA in providing erroneous intelligence estimates.

If CIA could not provide an accurate picture of the Cuban situation, then its reason for existence has disappeared entirely. The island is less than 100 miles from our shores and facilities for acquiring information, legitimate or not, are not sufficiently difficult to provide real challenge to an able and experienced intelligence force. But it is difficult to lay this charge at the door of CIA because the real nature of its responsibility in the Cuban affair cannot be readily determined.

It is sufficient, then, to draw the inference from President Kennedy's order that the information accumulated and acquired by CIA with

respect to the Cuban situation was less than accurate and tended to induce the United States to follow a course of action that afforded comfort only to Castro and Khrushchev. It is certainly evident that something went wrong in the planning and execution of the ill-fated rebellion, some miscalculation that has had the effect of adding heavy complications to the Cuban situation.

Although it is indeed impossible, without accurate knowledge of CIA operations, to estimate the value of its work, there have been reports that its activities leave a great deal to be desired. This may be due to the relative inexperience of the agency, which engages in an enterprise that has been traditionally abhorred by this nation but nevertheless is as necessary in the modern world as open military power.

Whether the reason for President Kennedy's order for a reappraisal of the operations and capabilities of CIA, it is necessary that it be done effectively and swiftly and that the efficiency and reliability of this agency be vastly improved. It is evident that Mr. Kennedy has acquired, in the past month, some deep misgivings regarding the important organization.